

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is made in response to applicant's amendment filed on 2/11/2011. Claims 1-13 and 20-23 are currently pending in the application. An action follows below:

Claim Objections

2. Claim 4 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claim 1 recites a pin that engages with a slot "such that rotation of the touch-sensitive input device is limited by movement of the pin within the slot". Claim 4 then recites "further comprising means for limiting the rotary degree of freedom." The Examiner feels that the pin engaged with the slot is the means that limits the rotary degree of freedom. As such, claim 4 does not further limit claim 1 because there is already means that limit the rotary degree of freedom claimed.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the slot and the pin engaged with the slot as described in claim 1 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

The Examiner notes that the features are described within the specification and expressly not shown (paragraph 29).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 1-13 and 20-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding claim 1, the newly amended limitations recite "a button carrier disposed within the bushing". The term 'within' is poorly chosen and does not correctly describe the relationship between the bushing and the button carrier as presented within the specification. As shown in Fig. 1B, the bushing (104) is smaller than the buttons carrier (108). It is unclear how the button carrier is within the bushing. The Examiner recommends amending the claim limitation to select wording that better describes the invention as presented within the drawings and specification with regard to the relationship between the bushing and the button carrier.

Claims 2-13 and 20-23 are dependent on claim 1 and therefore inherit the rejection from the parent claim.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Weiss et al. (USPN: 6225980), Bardaneh (USPgPub: 2004/0233159), and Zadesky et al. (USPN: 7046230) disclose various input systems allowing rotational input or touch-sensitive input devices.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to STEVEN HOLTON whose telephone number is (571)272-7903. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bipin Shalwala can be reached on (571) 272-7681. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Bipin Shalwala/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2629

/Steven E Holton/
Examiner, Art Unit 2629
May 20, 2011